

Valley Leisure



THE SACRAMENTO BEE

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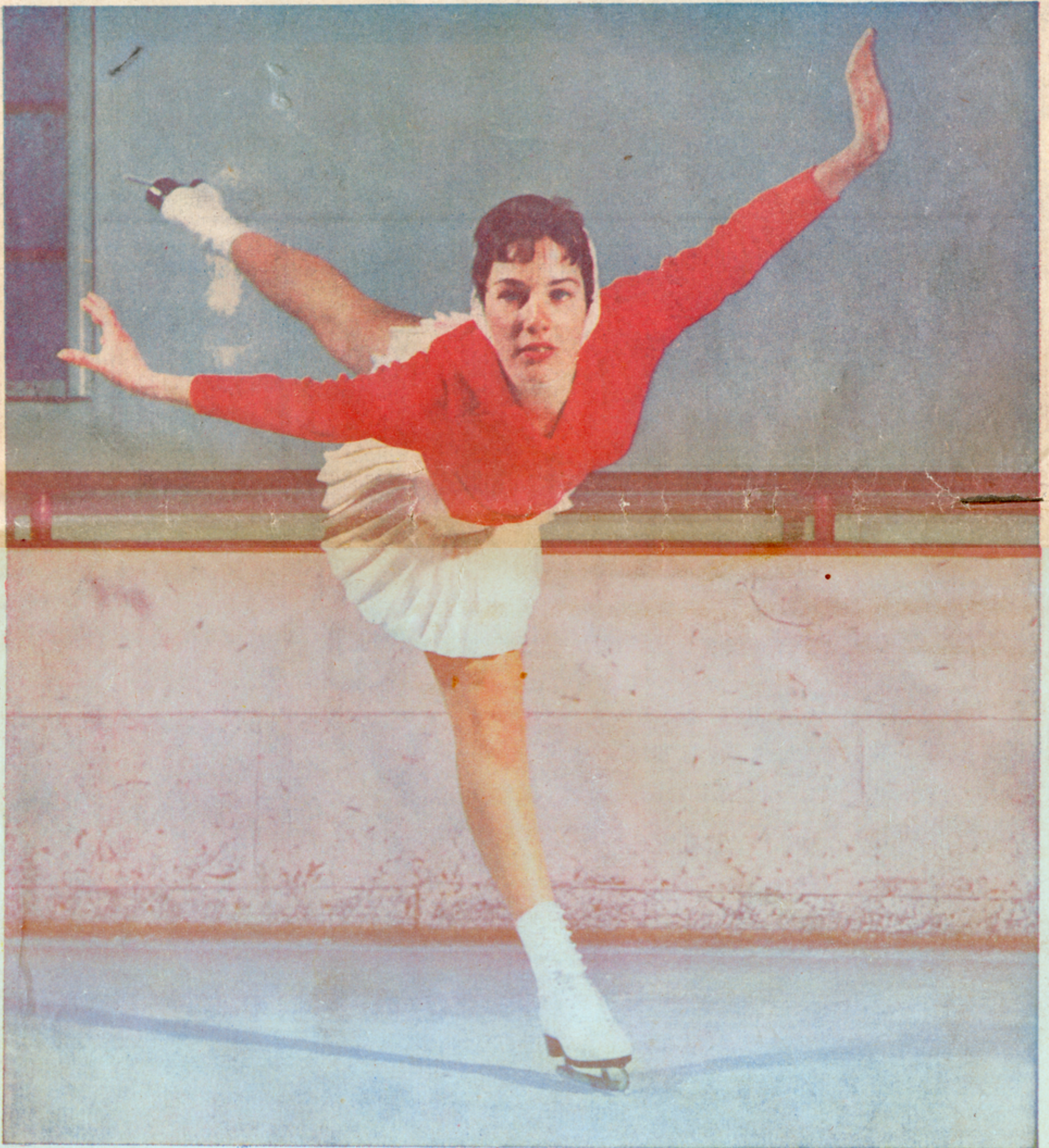


Figure Skater (Page L3)

TV Programs Section Inside



The stag leap.



One leg standing spin.



The tango plunge. Bee Photos



Francine Hughes puts on her skates for a practice session.

Skating Champion

By Douglas Dempster

NEARLY 10 years ago Francine Hughes took her very first spin on an ice rink. She had a number of spills and cracked open her chin.

Despite such an inauspicious start, this pretty, personable 16 year old La Sierra High School junior has skated and charmed her way to the 1960 Central Pacific Ice Skating championship in the pre novice class.

Francine was only out on the ice four or five times until three years ago when she began taking lessons in earnest at the Iceland rink in North Sacramento.

Now she puts in several hours of training in figure and free style skating each week. Training sessions, under the auspices of the United States Figure Skating Club, of which the local Capital City club is a branch, are held Tuesday

and Wednesday evenings.

Besides skating, Francine enjoys both snow and water skiing.

She is president of the La Sierra Ski Club, which is planning a snow trip Sierraward.

About field hockey, a physical education sport for girls at La Sierra, she confided, "They say I'm the toughest player on the team." She doesn't play ice hockey, however. "Too rough."

One of her accomplishments is a knowledge of Arabic, acquired when she was in

North Africa where her father was stationed many years as a United States Air Force test pilot.

Francine said Arabic was taught to children of servicemen in the schools because it was the preference of the natives. They ruled out Italian which was the parents' choice.

She got to see a good deal of Europe on leaves her father took. She toured about a dozen European countries.

"The place I liked best," she said, "was Garmisch, a small town in Germany near the Austrian border. It has a famous ice rink and some of the highest mountains in Germany. People ski on a nearby glacier the year 'round."

"It is so typical of a German town—not noisy, only a few tourists, not so commer-

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Cover

Francine Hughes, 1960 Central Pacific Ice Skating champion, cuts a pretty figure for the cover. Bee Color Photo by Gene Rose.

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cialized. There are mural paintings on the walls of the streets."

Francine returned to the United States with her parents three years ago and, because of frequent moves, has been in four different schools since.

Young Champion Would Like To Teach Ice Skating

"I hope I can go to La Sierra during my senior year," she said.

At various times, Francine has aspired to be a psychologist and a newspaperwoman.

"I've always been interested in people," she said.

She has given up these plans and wants eventually to join an ice show such as the Ice Follies.

"But this would be just for the experience," she believes. "What I'd really like to do is teach skating."

And sandwiched in there somewhere Francine would like, after graduation from La Sierra, to attend a junior college for a year and then go on to the University of California at Berkeley.

Oh yes, besides that acci-

dent with her chin on her first outing on the ice, Francine has managed to slit open her lip and once, while practicing for an amateur show at the local rink, ran over her hand.

"It's all part of the game," she remarked with a twinkle in her eyes.